

What is First Steps?

First Steps is Kentucky’s Early Intervention System (KEIS) that serves children from birth to age 3 who have a developmental delay or a particular medical condition that is known to cause a developmental delay. First Steps services are provided statewide and coordinated by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, which is the lead agency.

You or anyone in your community can call the district First Steps Point of Entry (POE) office to make a referral if there is a concern that a child you know may have a developmental delay.

Is my child eligible for First Steps services?

At your request, staff from the district POE office will visit your family, explain the First Steps program, assign a Service Coordinator, and arrange for an evaluation, if needed, to determine whether your child will be eligible for services.

The eligibility evaluation helps determine whether your child has a significant delay in one or more of the following skill areas: communication, mobility, learning, social, emotional, and adaptive/self-help. If the evaluation shows that your child is eligible because of a developmental delay or established risk condition, (particular medical condition) then the POE will work with you and your child to arrange early intervention services.

What is the Individual Family Service Plan?

The POE Service Coordinator, along with your family, physician, and the evaluation team, will design an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), identify needed resources, then obtain and coordinate early intervention services for your child and your family. For example, if the evaluation shows a delay in communication, speech therapy might be necessary. Therefore, the Service Coordinator will inform you about all the speech therapists in your area, and you may choose the therapist that fits your needs. Once all the service providers are identified, this team meets with you to complete the IFSP. This should be done within 45 days.

Services are individualized and based on your child’s need. The IFSP will be reviewed at least every 6 months and adjusted by the Service Coordinator and family as needed.

Point of Entry (POE)

Green River District

(270)686-5982
(888)686-1414
Daviness, Hancock, Henderson, Ohio, McLean, Union, Webster

Kentuckiana District

(502)459-0225
(800)442-0087
Bullitt, Henry, Jefferson Oldham, Shelby, Spencer, Trimble

FIVCO District

(606)929-9155
(800)650-1329
Boyd, Carter, Elliott, Greenup, Lawrence

Kentucky River District

(606)439-1325
(800)328-1767
Breathitt, Knott, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Owsley, Perry, Wolfe

Bluegrass District

(859)271-9448
(800)454-2764
Anderson, Bourbon, Boyle, Clark, Estill, Fayette, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jessamine, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Nicholas, Powell, Scott, Woodford

Purchase District

(270)442-5831
(800)648-6599
Ballard, Calloway, Carlisle, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Livingston, Marshall, McCracken

Barren River District

(270)901-5749
(800)643-6233
Allen, Barren, Butler, Edmonson, Hart, Logan, Metcalfe, Monroe, Simpson, Warren

Northern Kentucky District

(859)815-1095
(888)300-8866
Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Owen, Pendleton

Gateway District

(606)674-3204
(800)942-4358
Bath, Menifee, Morgan, Montgomery, Rowan

Cumberland Valley District

(606) 523-0229
(800)509-9559
Bell, Clay, Harlan, Jackson, Knox, Laurel, Rockcastle, Whitley

Pennyrile District

(270)886-5186
(800)609-0047
Caldwell, Christian, Crittenden, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Muhlenburg, Todd, Trigg

Lincoln Trail District

(270) 737-5921
(800)678-1879
Breckinridge, Grayson, Hardin, Larue, Marion, Meade, Nelson, Washington

Buffalo Trace District

(606)759-5510
(800)335-4249
Bracken, Fleming, Lewis, Mason, Robertson

Big Sandy District

(606)886-4417
(800)335-4249
Floyd, Johnson, Magoffin, Martin, Pike

Lake Cumberland District

(606) 678-2821
(800)378-2821
Adair, Casey, Clinton, Cumberland, Green, McCreary, Pulaski, Russell, Taylor, Wayne

What are my family rights while participating in First Steps?

You have specific rights under the First Steps Program. The Family Rights Handbook fully explains these rights and how to exercise them. As a First Steps family, you have the right to:

- ◆ Choose the services you want for your child, based on the evaluation.
- ◆ Give written permission to share your child’s personal information.
- ◆ Review all records.
- ◆ Receive a written notice before a change is made in your child’s IFSP.
- ◆ Have any complaints heard through a process explained in the Family Rights Handbook.

What happens as my child approaches his/her third birthday?

Children in the First Steps Program are eligible for services until their 3rd birthday. In order to help you learn about and decide on available services for your child after leaving First Steps, a transition planning meeting must be held at least 90 days prior to your child’s 3rd birthday.

This transition planning meeting will be coordinated by your Service Coordinator. The meeting may be attended by you, those you invite, your Service Coordinator, your child’s service providers and invited staff from any of the program(s) in your community for 3- to 5-year olds that you and your Service Coordinator identify as appropriate, such as Head Start, the local school district, etc. This meeting will provide important information about those programs and outline how to pursue getting your child enrolled in the program of your choice.

What is the cost of First Steps services to my family?

Evaluation and assessment to determine your child’s needs and service coordination are at no cost to the family. Once determined eligible, families must contribute a participation fee if financially able. This is called “Family Share” and it is based on your total household income and household size.

The fee amounts range from \$0 to a maximum of \$100 per month and are paid beginning the month intervention begins until the time of discharge. The participation fee is not based on dates and times of

services, but for participation in the First Steps program. If your child is eligible for the Kentucky Medical Assistance Program (KMAP) of KCHIP then KMAP or KCHIP will cover most First Steps cost. You may elect to use your private health insurance, but you are not obligated to do so. There are regulations regarding Family Share reimbursement for use of health insurance. Certain guidelines apply. Check with insurance carrier for details regarding services covered for First Steps services. Some restrictions might apply.

If you have further questions about any aspects of the program, call your Service Coordinator.

What services are available?

Services are based on your child’s needs and will be identified on your child’s IFSP. First Steps offers the following services.

Service Coordination - All eligible children will be assigned a Service Coordinator at no cost to the family to work with the family to implement the IFSP and to access community services.

Evaluation - Evaluation to determine eligibility.

Assessment - Assessment for purpose of service planning.

Individual Family Service Plan - Written plan stating what services will be provided, in what setting, how often, by whom and who the funding source will be.

Health Services -
Medical - provision of services by a physician for evaluation purposes to determine a child’s developmental status and need for early intervention services.
Nursing - to promote optimal health, safety and well being of the child. These services are limited.

Nutrition - Individual child assessment, nutritional history, dietary intake, and consultation in meeting nutritional needs.

Occupational Therapy - Therapy designed to improve your child’s ability to socialize, pay attention, play, eat, dress, and perform toileting and grooming tasks.

Physical Therapy - Therapy that enhances muscle and motor development.

Developmental Intervention - Includes services that provide families with information, skills and support related to enhancing the skill development of the child in the areas of physical, social, emotional, communicative, cognitive and adaptive development.

Assistive Technology - Providing devices to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of the child.

Communication Development - Identifying children with communicative or oropharyngeal disorders and delays in development of communication skills; providing services for the habilitation, rehabilitation, or prevention of those communicative disorders/delays;

referring to other professionals for services necessary to enhance communication.

Sensory Development -
Vision Services - evaluating and assessing visual functioning; training in communication skills, orientation and mobility visual development, independent living skills and other skills necessary to activate visual motor abilities; referring to other professionals for services necessary for habilitation or rehabilitation of visual disorders.
Audiology - evaluating and assessing auditory functioning; determining the range, nature and degree of hearing loss and communication functions; referring to other professionals for services necessary for habilitation or rehabilitation of hearing disorders.

Respite - temporary, short-term care to provide relief to families from the responsibility of caring for their infants/toddlers, reduce family stress, maintain family integrity and forestall out of home placement.

Transportation - cost of travel and related costs to those who are in need of transportation that is necessary to enable an eligible child and his/her family/caregivers to participate in and receive early intervention services.

First Steps services are available through various service providers. These service providers may occasionally be located in a center-based program, where your child will go to the center for his/her services but most often services are delivered by a service provider who comes to your home to provide services.

KEIS	Kentucky’s Early Intervention System
KMAP	Kentucky Medical Assistance Program
POE	Point of Entry
IFSP	Individual Family Service Plan
OT	Occupational Therapy
PT	Physical Therapy
ST	Speech Therapy
EI	Early Intervention
CHFS	Cabinet for Health and Family Services
TAT	Technical Assistance Teams
KCHIP	Kentucky’s Children’s Health Insurance Program

Do you have more questions or need more information?

First Steps has formed seven regionally-based Technical Assistance Teams (TAT). The teams are made up of a Program Consultant, Parent Consultant, and Program Evaluator. Each person on this team can help with additional questions regarding First Steps services. The Parent Consultant can be extremely helpful since she has a child who has experienced a developmental delay and most participated in the First Steps program. You can reach TA Teams at:

Murray State University (270) 809-6828 Purchase Pennyrile	Western KY University (270) 745-4641 Barren River Green River
University of Louisville (502) 852-7884 Lincoln Trail Kentuckiana	University of Kentucky (859) 257-1135 Bluegrass
Eastern KY University (606) 546-5109 Kentucky River Cumberland Valley Lake Cumberland	Morehead State University (606) 783-2362 FIVCO Gateway Big Sandy
NorthKey Community Care (859) 781-5586 Northern KY Buffalo Trace	

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Family Guide to Services



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